

Text of President's Speech

Following is the Text of President Johnson's televised speech before the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists:

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and my friends of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists. I am very happy that you requested through the press office this opportunity for us to meet together, because after looking at some of the cartoons you have drawn, I thought I'd invite you over to see me in person. After all, I had nothing to lose.

I know that I am talking to the most influential journalists in America. Reporters may write and politicians may talk, but what you draw remains in the public memory long after these other words are forgotten. That is why, after I learned that you would be here and we would meet together, that I put together some notes to discuss with you, while you were in Washington, a very little known side of our activity in one of the most vital places in the world—South Viet-Nam.

The war in Viet-Nam has many faces.

There is the face of armed conflict—of terror and gunfire — of bomb-heavy planes and campaign-weary soldiers. In this conflict our only object is, to prove that force will meet force, that armed conquest is futile and that aggression is not only wrong, but it will not work.

And the Communists in Viet-Nam are slowly beginning to realize what they



to Editorial Cartoonists

once scorned to believe: that we combine unlimited patience with unlimited resources in pursuit of an unwavering purpose.

We will not abandon our commitment to South Viet-Nam.

The second face of war in Viet-Nam is the quest for a political solution—the face of diplomacy and politics—of the ambitions and the interests of nations. We know, as our adversaries should also know, there is no purely military solution in sight for either side. We are ready for unconditional discussions. Most of the non-Communist nations of the world favor such discussions. And it would clearly be in the interest of North Viet-Nam to come to the conference table. For them continuation of war, without talks, means only damage without conquest.

Communist China apparently desires the war to continue whatever the cost to their allies. Their target is not merely South Viet-Nam. It is Asia. Their objective is not the fulfillment of Vietnamese nationalism. It is to erode and discredit America's ability to help prevent Chinese domination over all of Asia.

In this they shall never

succeed.

Peace Search Continues

And I am continuing and increasing the search for every possible path to peace.

The third face of war in Viet-Nam is, at once, the most tragic and the most hopeful. It is the face of human need. It is the untended sick, the hungry family and the illiterate child. It is men and women, many

without shelter, with rags for clothing, struggling for survival in a rich and fertile land.

It is the most important battle of all.

For a nation cannot be built by armed power or political agreement. It will rest on the expectation by individual men and women that their future will be better than their past.

It is not enough to fight against something. People must fight for something. The people of South Viet-Nam must know that after the long, brutal journey through the dark tunnel of conflict there breaks the light of a happier life. Only if this is so can they be expected to sustain the enduring will for continued strife. Only in this way can long-run stability and peace come to the land.

There is another more profound reason. In Viet-Nam communism seeks to impose its will by force of arms. But we would be deeply mistaken to think this was the only weapon. Here, as elsewhere, they speak to restless people—people rising to shatter the old ways which have imprisoned hope—people fiercely and justly reaching for the material fruits from the tree of modern knowledge.

Points Out the Task

It is this desire, and not simply lust for conquest, which moves many of the individual fighting men we must now, sadly, call the enemy.

It is, therefore, our task

to show that freedom from the control of other nations offers the surest road to progress. History and experience testify to this truth. But it is not enough to call upon reason, or point to examples. We must show it through action and accomplishment.

And even were there no war, hot or cold, we would be active in humanity's search for progress. This task is commanded to us by the moral values of our civilization. And it rests on the inescapable nature of the world we have now entered. For in that world, as long as we can foresee, every threat to man's welfare will be a threat to the welfare of our own people. Those who live in the emerging community of nations will ignore the perils of their neighbors at the risk of their own prospects.

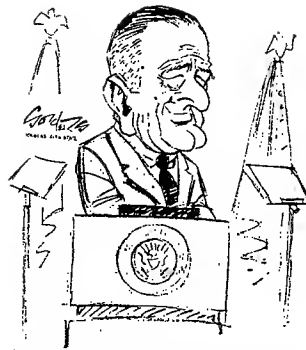
This is true, not only for Viet-Nam, but for every part



of the developing world. It is why I recently proposed a massive, cooperative development effort for South east Asia. I named Eugene Black as my personal representative to inaugurate our participation in these programs.

Since that time rapid progress has been made. Mr. Black has talked with top officials of the United Nations and other interested parties. He has found increasing enthusiasm. The United Nations is already setting up new mechanisms to help carry forward the work of development.

In addition, the United States is now prepared to participate in, and support, an Asian Development Bank, to help finance economic progress. I call on every industrialized country, including the Soviet Union,



to create a better life for the people of Southeast Asia. Surely the works of peace can bring men together in a common effort to abandon forever the ways of war.

Focus of Our Work

But, as South Viet-Nam is the central place of conflict, it is also a principal focus of our work to increase the well-being of people.

It is that effort in South Viet-Nam which I want principally to discuss with you today.

We began in 1954, when Viet-Nam became independent, before the war between North and South.

Since that time we have spent more than \$2 billion in economic help for the 16 million people of South Viet-Nam.

And, despite the ravages of war, we have made steady gains.

We have concentrated on food, health, education, housing and industry.

Like most developing countries, South Viet-Nam's economy rests on agriculture. Unlike many, it has large uncrowded areas of rich and fertile land. Because of this, it is one of the great rice bowls of the

world. With our help, since 1954, South Viet-Nam has doubled its rice production, providing food for the people and a vital export for the nation.

And we have put our farm knowhow to work on other crops. This year several hundred million cuttings of a new variety of sweet potato, promising a sixfold increase in yield, will be distributed to Vietnamese farmers. Corn output should rise from 25,000 tons in 1962 to 100,000 tons by 1966. Pig production has more than doubled since 1955. Many animal diseases have been eliminated.

Health Steps Taken

Disease and epidemic brood over every Vietnamese village. In a country of 16 million with a life expectancy of 35 years there are only 200 civilian doctors. If the Vietnamese had doctors in the same ratio as the United States, they would have not a mere 200, but over 5000 doctors.

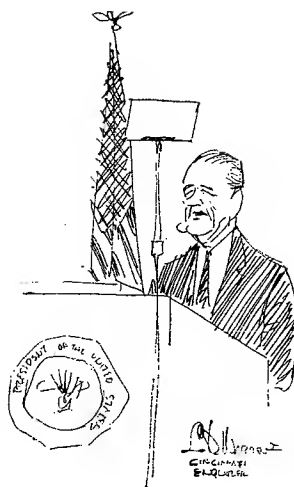
We have helped vaccinate over 7 million people against cholera; and millions more against other diseases. Hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese can now receive treatment in the more than 12,000 hamlet health stations we have built and stocked. New clinics and surgical suites are scattered across the country. And the medical school we are helping to build will graduate as many doctors in a single year as now serve the entire civilian population.

Education is the keystone



The Many Faces of LBJ

These cartoons show how some of the Nation's leading editorial cartoonists saw President Johnson as he addressed them at a special gathering in the East Room of the White House yesterday. The President expressed pleasure that the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists had asked to see him, and added: "after looking at some of the cartoons you have drawn, I thought I'd invite you over to see me in person. After all, I had nothing to lose."



that we are in the 51st month of continued prosperity, the longest peacetime prosperity for America since our country was founded. Yet our entire future is at stake.

What a difference it would make if we could only call upon a small fraction of our unmatched private resources—businesses and unions, agricultural groups and builders—if we could call them to the task of peaceful progress in Viet-Nam. With such a spirit of patriotic sacrifice we might well strike an irresistible blow for freedom there and for freedom throughout the world.

I, therefore, hope that every person within the sound of my voice in this

of future development in Viet-Nam. It takes a trained people to man the factories, conduct the administration, and form the human foundation for an advancing nation. More than a quarter-million young Vietnamese can now learn in the over 4000 classrooms we have helped build in the last two years. And 2000 more schools will be built in the next 12 months. The number of students in vocational schools has gone up four times. Elementary school enrollment was 300,000 in 1955. It is now more than one million five hundred thousand.

And the 8 million textbooks we have supplied to Viet-Nam children will rise to more than 15 million by 1967.

Agriculture is the foundation.

Health, education and housing are the urgent human needs.

But industrial development is the pathway to the future.

When Viet-Nam was divided most of the industry was in the North.

Nation's Face Changing

The South was barren of manufacturing and the foundations for industry. Today more than 700 new or rehabilitated factories—textile mills and cement plants, electronics and plastics—are changing the face of the nation. Now roads and communications, railroad equipment and electric generators are a spreading base on which new industry can grow.

All this progress goes on, and will go on, under circumstances of staggering adversity.

Communist terrorists have made aid programs a special target of attack. Agricultural stations are destroyed and medical centers burned. More than a hundred Vietnamese malaria fighters are dead or

missing. Our own AID officials have been wounded, killed and kidnaped.

These are not the accidents of war. They are part of a deliberate campaign, in the words of the Communists, "to cut the fingers off the hands of the government."

We intend to continue, and increase, our material help to Viet-Nam.

Nor can anyone doubt the determination of the South Vietnamese themselves. But progress does not come from investment alone, or plans on a desk, or directives from Washington.

It takes men.

Men must take the seed to the farmer, and teach the use of fertilizer, and help in harvest.

Men must build the schools and instruct the students.

Men must carry medicine into the jungle, and treat the sick, and shelter the homeless.

And men—brave, tireless,

filled with love for their fellows — are doing this through the long, hot, danger-filled Vietnamese days and nights.

Labor Goes On

The fullest glory must go to those South Vietnamese laboring for their own people and nation. In hospitals and schools, along rice fields and roads, they continue to work, never knowing when death or terror may come.

How incredible it is there are a few who still say the South Vietnamese do not want to continue this struggle. They are sacrificing and dying by the thousands. Their patient valor in the heavy presence of personal, physical danger should be a helpful lesson to those of us who only have to read about it.

We have our own heroes

who labor at the works of peace in the midst of war. They toil, unarmed and without uniforms. They know the humanity of their concern does not exempt them from the horrors of conflict. Yet they go on. They bring food to the hungry and medicine to the sick. They help the farmer with his crops, families to find clean water, villages to receive the healing miracle of electricity.

For most Americans, this is an easy war. Men fight, and suffer and die; as they must in war. But the lives of most of us are untroubled. Prosperity rises, abundance increases, the Nation flourishes.

I will report to the Cabinet when I leave this room



country this morning will look for ways—and those citizens of other nations who believe in humanity as we do, I hope that they will find ways to help progress in South Viet-Nam.

This, then, is the third face of our struggle in Viet-Nam. It was there—the illiterate, the hungry, the sick—before this war began. It will be there when peace comes to us—and so will we. Not with soldiers and planes, not with bombs and bullets, but with all the wondrous weapons of peace in the 20th century.

And then, perhaps together, all of the people of the world can share that gracious task with all the people of Viet-Nam, North and South alike.

Thank you for coming this morning. Good morning.